

On the Use of the Slow Loris in Malay Medicine.

BY H. N. RIDLEY.

The following instructions for the medical and magic uses of the Loris, were copied some time ago from a manuscript in Malay, and are excellent illustrations of Malay ideas as to medicine. In many respects these receipts recall European medical ideas of some four centuries ago. The notion that one drug will act beneficially in all diseases that flesh is heir to is by no means extinct among the more ignorant classes at the present day, while the use of animals, especially if of strange and uncanny appearance, simply because they were odd looking, was formerly quite common in Europe. Thus the viper, and the scinc (*Mabuia*) were valued highly as late as 1694. (Pomet's Drugs). Still earlier toads, bats and other such animals were used in magic as the Loris is among the Malays and Indians to this day.

The Kongkang, or Slow Loris (*Nycticebus tardigradus*) is common all over the peninsula and also occurs in India. Its strange appearance with its large eyes and ape-like hands, its nocturnal habits and its manner of covering its eyes with its hands, have stamped it in the eyes of all Orientals as an uncanny beast closely associated with demons, which it is supposed to have special facilities for seeing. I have been informed that its tears if applied to the eyes impart such clearness of vision that the person using it is able to see ghosts. The method of obtaining the tears is to take the animal among a herd of cows when it commences to weep, but another plan which indeed sounds more likely to succeed was to wrap the animal's body in a white cloth, and throw pepper in its eyes. The tears are collected on a bit of cotton.

Five varieties of the Loris are recognised by the Malays, viz., the Kongkang ayer, the common grey form, so called

32 USE OF THE SLOW LORIS IN MALAY MEDICINE.

because it is said it can swim ; Kongkang angin, which is black. This variety is said to have the power of vanishing when a storm arises, if it is merely tied with a string in a house, but if confined in a cage it cannot do. Kongkang api is red with a white mark on its forehead and nose. Kongkang orang is brownish with a red line over its head and down its back. The white variety Kongkang puteh or Kongkang Kayu is very rare and is the most valuable one for magic purposes. It derives its second name from the peculiar property of causing a tree to fall in any desired direction. To effect this it must be either found dead or killed in a special manner known only to an initiated few, its bones are then laid in a row in the direction in which it is desired that the tree shall fall when felled and the tree will fall exactly on the bones.

In cutting up a Kongkang for magical purposes it is necessary that the knife used shall be ornamented with gold. The skull if put in a hole in the ground beneath a house will cause ghosts (hantus) to appear. The fur if burnt and given to a woman to eat will cause her to like her husband however much she may have previously disliked him.

PASAL PERGUNA'AN KONG KANG.

Ayer mata-nya itu jika di pakai pada badan kita yani di masokkan k-dalam suatu bekas di-pakai sperti azimat, Insha Allah sklian yang mmendang kita kaseh sklian-nya.

2. Darah-nya jika di champor dngan dawat di tuliskan azimat Insha Allah mustajab barang perbuat tau-nya, dan jika di champor dngan ayer susu manusia di sapukan pada mulut periok, mlainkan tiada masah nasi itu.

3. Prot-nya itu di jmor kring kring dan apabila kita handak naik rumah orang di asah dngan ayer embon dan jebat di sapukan di dawah lantai-nya nschaya tertidor orang yang di dalam rumah itu dan tiada ktahui kita naik rwmah-nya itu, dan jika di sapukan pada binatang yang buas buas, sperti Harimau, Sapi, atau Gajah terplihara deri-pada kjahatan-nya, dan jika orang sakit di asah dngan kulit dedak sdikit di-bri minum nscha-ya sembah.

4. Prot-nya itu jika di-bri kring kring apabila ada prem-puan susa hndak beranak di asah dngan mempedu-nya dan ayer

mawar di sapukan pada ari ari-nya prempuan itu nschaya kluar anak-nya itu.

5. Mata-nya yang kanan itu jika di lumatkan di champor dngan susu orang atau susu kambing dan minyak Yatmon di champorkan pada surmohi di-buat chelak nschaya trang mata yang kelam dngan kuasa Tuhan.

6. Mata-nya kiri itu di lumatkan halus halus di champor dngan ayer Mawar, ayer madoo dan kapor barus, di buat chelak mata atau di makan dngan sirih yang bertmu urat nschaya kaseh orang mmiadang kita, dan jika di bri makan pada binatang yang liar mnjadi jinak.

7. Hati-nya itu jika di kringkan baik baik pada panas kmdian di lumatkan dan di champor dngan minyak Ziton dan di sapukan pada (Zakar) bawa jinak terlalu lazat, dan jika di tanam pada rumah kita jadi hormat rumah itu.

8. Tulang blakang-nya jika di tanam di bawah pintu rumah kita mlainkan tiada boleh pnchuri masok.

9. Tulang kaki-nya itu jika di kolom di dalam mulot di bawah berchakap-chakap di hadapan Raja raja lmah lahya berbuat dhalim di atas kita dan jika di masak dngan minyak ular atau harimau atau minyak ziton di sapukan pada kaki orang yang lemah neschaya affiat olehiya.

10. Paruparunya itu jika di tampal pada pintu orang mlainkan bercherai berai orang rumah itu.

11. Jantongnya itu di kringkan di ambil satu (kerat) dan di asah dengan (mani) kita di bri makan perumpuan neschaya kaseh dia dengan kita.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE USE OF THE LORIS.

1. If the tears of this animal be worn on the body, we can place them in a small case and carry as a sacred wand. All persons beholding our countenance shall by God's will bear an affectionate feeling towards us.

2. Its blood may be mixed with ink, and written with as a sacred writing, by the will of God any business will prove successful; and it can be mixed with milk and rubbed on the mouth of a pot, when the rice which is to be cooked will never be done.

34 USE OF THE SLOW LORIS IN MALAY MEDICINE.

3. Its gut is to be dried, and when we want to use it, take a piece and rub it on a stone with dew and civet; when rubbed below the floor of a house, the inmates will fall asleep and will not know we are getting in, and if rubbed on wild animals such as tigers, oxen or elephants, the person approaching will be safe from harm, and if ground up with a little bark of Dadup (*Erythrina*) and given to a sick person it will cure him at once.

4. The gut when dried and ground with its gall together with rose water and rubbed on the abdomen of a woman in confinement, will assist to cause delivery.

5. The right eye dried and ground to powder and mixed with human or goat's milk and some sweet oil may be used as an eye ointment which will make dim sight bright by the will of God.

6. The left eye ground fine and mixed with rose water, honey and camphor (*Sumatran*) can be used as an eye ointment or eaten with sirih leaf, the nerves of which meet together causes all who look on us to love us, and if given to a wild beast it will become tame.

7. The heart well dried and ground and mixed with olive oil and rubbed on acts as an aphrodisiac and buried in the front of a house makes it appear respectable.

8. If its backbone is buried beneath the door of the house we can prevent thieves from entering.

9. If the bone of its left leg be kept in the mouth during a conversation with a rajah, it will prevent his doing any acts of tyranny to us, and if we cook it with oil of snake or tiger or olive oil and rub it on the feet of a weak person, it will strengthen him.

10. If its lung is placed beneath the door, the people of the house will be separated.

11. If the liver be dried and a piece taken and rubbed up and given to a woman to eat it will produce in her feelings of love towards us.